

REMARKS

The above-identified continuation patent application was filed on March 22, 2004. This preliminary amendment amends the specification to contain the reference to the prior-filed United States Patent Application Serial No. 10/256,799, filed September 27, 2002, now United States Patent No. 6,758,600 required by 35 U.S.C. §120 and paragraph (a)(2)(i) of 37 C.F.R. §1.78.

Pursuant to §1.78(a)(2)(ii), the reference is being submitted during the pendency of the later-filed application and within four months from the actual filing date of the later-filed application. Pursuant to §1.115(2)(i), this preliminary amendment is being filed within three months from the filing date of the later-filed application under 37 C.F.R. §1.53(b). Accordingly, the preliminary amendment may not be disapproved.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter this preliminary amendment prior to substantive examination of the application. This preliminary amendment does not result in more independent or total claims than paid for previously. Accordingly, no fee for excess claims is believed due. The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any other fee due in connection with the filing of this response and not accounted for elsewhere to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. Any overpayment should be credited to Deposit Account No. 19-2167.

Respectfully submitted,



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